



LUNCH & LEARN



Please welcome our new ambassador Nick Gladding (L) alongside Academy Director William McKeever (R)

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Megan Tennimon (fourth from left), Sarasota County School Board Candidate with members and staff of the Academy at Glengary

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Sarasota Police Department Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) with members and staff of the Academy at Glengary

Interested in scheduling a Lunch & Learn?
Please contact Patty Haltfinner at 941-921-9932.

WARM WELCOME TO DIEGO PEGUERO

by Diego Peguero



Hello everyone! I am the new Chef Instructor at the Academy at Glengary. Originally from Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic—my culinary journey has taken me through New York, Chicago and overseas, before finding my home here in Florida. I've worn almost every hat in the hospitality industry: busboy, server, bartender, prep and line cook, saucier, chef de partie, sous chef, front of house manager, private chef, catering chef, and instructor.

This diverse background taught me the true value of resilience, hard work, and community. I believe deeply in camaraderie, friendship, and building self-worth. Working alongside our members is profoundly rewarding, and I strive every day to be a compassionate co-worker, friend and neighbor who helps this community thrive.

I am a lifelong learner. Life is too good to pass up an opportunity to grow, which is why my background is filled with mastering new challenges. Over the years, my curiosity has driven me to learn woodworking, soldering, motorcycle mechanics, PC computer building, and many other pursuits. While those were different chapters of my life, my drive to learn remains.



(L to R) Diego Peguero and Yvonne Miller preparing lunch in culinary

Today, you'll likely find me cooking, out kayaking, enjoying great music, or trying to play the piano. I look forward to growing with all of you!

CREATING A CIRCLE OF FRIENDSHIP

by Erica Siegel & Michael Silverman



Members enjoying the "Circle of Friendship" social

The Academy offers social programming on select evenings, weekends and every holiday to provide opportunities for members to socialize, cultivate friendships and enjoy camaraderie outside of our normal work-ordered day. The following is a new initiative inspired by one of our members, Erica Siegel.

Recently, something new and genuinely special took place on a recent evening at the Academy at Glengary.

With a shared vision, Academy Ambassador Rich Segall and I set out to answer a simple but meaningful question: how can members build real friendships in a fun, relaxed setting? The result was the very first "Circle of Friendship" and it exceeded expectations.

We intentionally designed the event to feel welcoming and fun rather than formal. At the Academy, social connection is a key part of the 8-Dimensions of Wellness that guide programming, making this social a natural extension of that mission.

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On the evening of the gathering, 12 members came together, forming a circle that set the tone for openness and connection.



Academy Ambassador Rich Segall (L) and members enjoying the "Circle of Friendship" social

As member Michael Silverman

described it, "The first thing we did was move 12 seats into a circle. Then we carried over the Buddy Bench."

We began with a lighthearted icebreaker. Laughter came easily, and conversations began to flow. From there, the discussion turned to friendship - what it means, how it forms, and how to find opportunities to connect. Michael also shared, "Every member said they would come to another event, and every member said they made at least one new friend."

There's strong hope that the "Circle of Friendship" will become a regular, monthly event continuing to support the social wellness that is so central to the Academy experience.

We're excited to host the next "Circle of Friendship" Tuesday, April 28, 2026 from 5-6:30pm.



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